

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20, 37, 39 and 41 are pending in this application.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 17, 18, 37 and 41 are allowed, and that claims 4-12, 15 and 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. It is noted that claims 15 and 16 depend from allowed independent claim 41, and thus should already be in condition for allowance. For the reasons set forth below, claims 4-12, 15 and 16 have not been rewritten in independent form at this time.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 13, 14, 19, 20 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,971,213 to Lee (hereinafter "Lee") in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,220,783 to Ranney (hereinafter "Ranney"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a refrigerator including a main body having a storage space formed therein, and a door having an insulating layer therein and rotatably coupled to the main body so as to selectively open and close the storage space. The refrigerator includes a dispenser including a dispenser housing installed in a concave portion of a front surface of the door, wherein the dispenser discharges water to an outside of the refrigerator, and a water tank installed between a door liner that defines a rear surface of the door and the dispenser housing. The water tank is spaced apart by a predetermined interval from each of the door liner and the dispenser housing and the water tank is at least partially surrounded by the insulating layer, and

wherein the water tank stores water supplied from an external water supply source at a predetermined temperature and provides water to the dispenser for discharge to the outside.

Independent claim 39 is also directed to a refrigerator having a dispenser. The refrigerator includes a main body including an inner case positioned within an outer case, the inner case defining a storage space that is divided into a refrigerating chamber and a freezing chamber by a barrier, an insulating layer formed between the inner case and the outer case, and within the barrier that divides the refrigerating chamber and the freezing chamber, a water tank provided adjacent to the insulating layer, wherein the water tank receives water from an external water supply source and stores the received water therein, and a dispenser coupled to the water tank, wherein the dispenser dispenses water from the water tank.

As acknowledged in the Office Action, Lee alone neither discloses nor suggests all of the features of independent claims 1 and 39, or the respective claimed combinations of features.

More specifically, Lee discloses a water dispenser 1 provided with a door 10 of a refrigerator. The dispenser includes a water supply box 19 and drawer 20 provided in the door 10, and coupled to a tank 11 by an inlet hose 23. The tank 11 is positioned against an interior surface of the door 10, within the storage space of the refrigerator, so that water held in the tank 11 will be cooled by the cooling air in the storage space. To refill the tank 11, the drawer 20 is withdrawn from the box 19, water is supplied to the tank 11 via the drawer 20 and the inlet hose 23, and then the drawer 20 is replaced. Water is dispensed through a hose 12 and cock 13

provided at a dispensing part 16 of the door 10. The tank 11 may be disconnected from the hose 23 and detached from the door 10 for cleaning (see column 5/lines 28-31 of Lee).

Independent claim 1 recites a water tank installed between a door liner that defines a rear surface of the door and the dispenser housing. In contrast, as shown in, for example, Figure 2 of Lee, the water tank 11 disclosed by Lee is positioned against the rear, or interior, surface of the door 10, so as to be positioned within the storage space of the refrigerator. Lee discloses that the tank 11 can be detached from the door 10 for cleaning, and thus, the tank 11 is not installed within any interior portion of the door 10, but on the surface of the door 10. Thus, in Lee's dispenser 1, the inner liner, or inner surface, of the door 10 is positioned between the corresponding contacting surface of the tank 11 and the dispensing part 16 on the front surface 27 of the door 10. Lee neither discloses nor suggests a water tank installed between a door liner that defines a rear surface of the door and the dispenser housing, as recited in independent claim 1.

Independent claim 1 also recites that the water tank is spaced apart by a predetermined interval from each of the door liner and the dispenser housing, and the water tank is at least partially surrounded by the insulating layer. In contrast, as set forth above, in Lee's dispenser 1, the tank 11 is positioned directly against the interior surface of the door 10, and thus is not spaced apart therefrom.

Similarly, independent claim 39 recites a water tank provided adjacent to the insulating layer (that is formed between an inner case and an outer case). In contrast, as set forth above,

the tank 11 disclosed by Lee is positioned adjacent to the inner surface, or inner liner, of the door 10, and that inner surface of the door 10 is positioned between the tank 11 and any insulation which may be present between the inner surface and the outer surface 27 of the door 10.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Lee neither discloses nor suggests a water tank as recited in independent claims 1 and 39.

Further, Ranney is merely cited as allegedly teaching an inner liner that defines a rear surface of the door, and thus fails to overcome the deficiencies of Lee. Additionally, Ranney discloses a refrigerator 10 having an ice compartment 14 that holds a block of ice 15, with a tank 16 attached to an inner surface of a panel member 17 of the door 11 by a metal shell 32. When the door 11 is closed, the tank 16 rests directly against the block of ice 15, which cools the water in the tank 16, and water may be dispensed from the tank 16 through the faucet 28. The door 11 is a single panel door that consists of only the panel member 17 surrounded by a decorative finishing frame 18. Thus, Ranney's door 11 does not include an inner panel and an outer panel, and an insulating layer therein, as does the door recited in independent claim 1. Likewise, Ranney neither discloses an insulating layer formed between an inner case and an outer case, as recited in independent claim 39.

The Office Action asserts that the shell 32 that fixes the tank 11 to the panel member 17 constitutes an inner liner. However, the shell 32 extends only across a rear portion of the tank

11, and thus does not define a rear surface of the door 11. Rather, the rear surface of the door is defined by the rear surface of the panel member 17.

As with Lee, Ranney neither discloses nor suggests a water tank installed between a door liner that defines a rear surface of the door and a dispenser housing, as recited in independent claim 1, nor that the water tank is spaced apart by a predetermined interval from each of the door liner and the dispenser housing and the water tank is at least partially surrounded by the insulating layer, as recited in independent claim 1. Similarly, as with Lee, Ranney neither discloses nor suggests an insulating layer formed between the inner case and the outer case, and a water tank provided adjacent to the insulating layer, as recited in independent claim 39.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 39 are allowable over the applied combination, and thus the rejection of independent claims 1 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lee and Ranney should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2, 3, 13, 14, 19 and 20 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned, **Joanna K. Mason**, at the telephone number listed below.

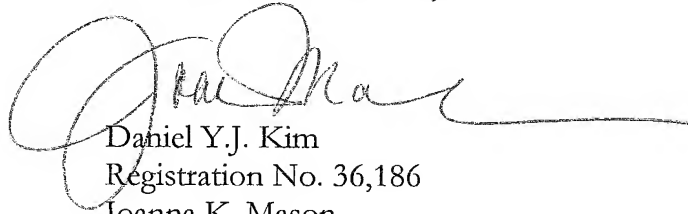
Serial No. **10/580,234**

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Reply to Office Action of **December 22, 2008**

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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